

BACKGROUND

This invention relates to wiping devices for long, slender objects, such as motor oil dipsticks.

In checking the level and condition of the fluid in a motor crankcase, transmission, or power-assist pump, a common way is to observe the fluid level on the appropriate dipstick. In doing so, one usually pulls the dipstick out to wipe it clean, re-inserts it, then pulls it out again to check the actual fluid level. To wipe the dipstick clean, one normally uses an absorbent material that is free of dirt and debris. Many people use a paper towel or cloth rag. But, these items often allow oil to soak through to the hands, usually requiring additional cleanup. This also creates unnecessary waste.

The device of this invention is used to conveniently wipe clean a fluid dipstick, while preventing the fluid itself from soaking into the hands. This allows the user to check fluid levels often, without ever having to clean-up afterward.

SUMMARY

In accordance with this invention, a device comprises a base and a cap that are hinged along one side, a latching means on the opposite side.

The invention also comprises an opposing pair of wiping features, as one is secured to the interior of the base and the other is secured to the interior of the cap.

The preferred embodiment of this invention is used to wipe fluids from typical dipsticks. In general, however, the function of this invention may also include the act of applying a thin layer of fluid to appropriate objects, for the purpose of lubricating, painting, etc.

The function of this invention may also incorporate a variety of said wiping features in which, for example, a flow of a cleansing liquid, such as water, is instituted with the housing to facilitate thorough cleaning.

REFERENCE TO DRAWINGS

Drawing Figures

Fig 1 shows the preferred embodiment of the invention in the open position, in perspective.

Fig 2 shows a typical dipstick, in perspective

Fig 3 shows the preferred embodiment of the invention containing a dipstick in the closed position, in perspective.

Reference Numerals in Drawings

10	Cap
20	Base
30	Housing
40	Interior Cap Surface
50	Interior Base Surface
60	Cap Pad
70	Base Pad

80	Hinging Means
81	Hinge Side
90	Latching Means
91	Latch Side
92	Catch
93	Strike
100	Fluid Dipstick
101	Exposed Surface of Dipstick

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

A preferred embodiment of the invention is shown in **Figure 1**. This embodiment comprises a uniform cross section, consisting of an extruded shape. This embodiment also comprises two pads of soft, absorbent material that are fastened into the extruded shape. The extruded shape forms a cap **10** and a base **20**. Together the cap and the base are referred to as a housing **30**. The cap can be opened and closed, while remaining attached to the base by a hinging means **80**, along a hinge side **81**. Once closed, the cap can be secured to the base using an appropriate latching means on a latch side **91**, which is opposite the hinge side. The two pads are referred to as a cap pad **60** and a base pad **70**. When the invention is in the closed position, the two pads contact each other across a single plane. When the device is in the closed position, it can perform its intended function.

In the preferred embodiment, the hinging means comprises a contiguous segment of extruded material, which is adjacent to both the cap and the base along the hinge side. The extruded material is plastic, but can also be some other material that is suitable for allowing the invention to open and close repeatedly, while said material remains pliable.

In the preferred embodiment, the latching means comprises both a catch **92** featured on the cap, and a mating strike **93** featured on the base. Both of which are contiguous portions of the extruded shape.

In the preferred embodiment, the pads **60 & 70** are made of felt material. Using an appropriate fastening means, such as ordinary glue, they are affixed directly to interior surfaces of the invention. They are positioned in such a way that, when the invention is in its closed position, the pads contact each other squarely and uniformly. The housing of the invention protects the pads from contamination, and from contacting other objects.

Figure 2 shows a typical fluid dipstick **100**, found in many automobiles. When used with the intended function of the preferred embodiment, the invention will wipe fluid from a typical dipstick. In use, the invention is opened to accept the dipstick. Once the dipstick is removed from its designated operating location, the invention is placed around the exposed portion of the dipstick near its handle. The invention is positioned in such a way that, when the invention is in its closed position, the felt pads will contact both exposed surfaces **101** of the dipstick.

In **Figure 3**, the invention is shown in the closed position, containing the dipstick **100**. Once the invention is closed onto the the exposed surfaces and held shut by the latching means **90**, the dipstick can be pulled

through the invention to be wiped free of fluid. As the dipstick is pulled through the invention, the fluid on the dipstick is absorbed by the pads of felt, and kept from soaking the hands of the user. When the stick is removed completely from the invention, it is replaced in its designated location to check the fluid.